

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LONDON 15268 241746Z

53

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 SP-02 USIA-06 AID-05

NSC-05 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5893

INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USDEL MTN GENEVA

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, UK, JA, TW

SUBJECT: UK PUTS IMPORT CONTROLS ON TAIWANESE TELE-
VISION SETS AND CONCLUDES VOLUNTARY AGREEMENT
WITH JAPAN

REF: LONDON 13728

1. THE UK GOVERNMENT HAS ANNOUNCED THAT QUANTITATIVE
RESTRICTIONS ARE BEING PLACED ON IMPORTS OF PORTABLE
BLACK/WHITE TELEVISION SETS FROM TAIWAN. DURING THE 15-
MONTH PERIOD FROM OCTOBER 1, 1976 TO DECEMBER 31, 1977,
ONLY 70,000 PORTABLE BLACK/WHITE SETS FROM TAIWAN WILL
BE LICENSED FOR IMPORT INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM. THIS
ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE EC
COMMISSION UNDER THE COMMUNITY'S EMERGENCY PROVISIONS.

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PAGE 02 LONDON 15268 241746Z

2. DEPARTMENT OF TRADE OFFICIALS SAY THE ACTION AGAINST

TAIWAN WAS TAKEN BECAUSE OF THE EXTREMELY RAPID RISE IN IMPORTS THIS YEAR, AND BECAUSE TAIWAN ACTS AS THE PRICE LEADER IN THE UK PORTABLE B/W MARKET. TRADE DATA SHOWS 25,000 OF THESE SETS IMPORTED IN 1975 AND 45,000 SETS IMPORTED IN THE FIRST HALF OF 1976. THE 45,000 SETS REPRESENT APPROXIMATELY 20 OF ALL BLACK AND WHITE IMPORTS FOR THAT PERIOD.

3. EVEN MORE ALARMING TO THE UKG IS FACT 104,000 IMPORT LICENSES FOR PORTABLE B/W SETS HAVE BEEN REQUESTED BY TAIWAN THIS YEAR FOR THE PERIOD THROUGH AUGUST 31. (FYI. THE UK MAINTAINS AN IMPORT LICENSING SCHEME FOR ALL TELEVISION SETS, EXCEPT THOSE FROM ITS EUROPEAN COMMUNITY PARTNERS. UNTIL NOW ALL REQUESTS WERE GRANTED AUTOMATICALLY, AND THE SYSTEM WAS USED TO MONITOR IMPORTS SO THAT LEVELS WERE QUICKLY APPARENT.

4. JAPAN HAS AGREED TO A VOLUNTARY ARRANGEMENT ON ITS EXPORTS OF B/W SETS TO THE UK. EXPORTS TO UK IN SECOND HALF OF 1976 WILL NOT EXCEED FIRST HALF LEVEL OF 118,000 SETS.

5. DEPARTMENT OF TRADE OFFICIALS ARE ALREADY PLANNING ON TALKS WITH TAIWAN AND JAPAN ABOUT 1977 AND PERHAPS 1978 UK IMPORT LEVELS. APPARENTLY, OFFICIALS DO NOT SEE AN EARLY END TO THE RESTRICTIONS ON THESE TWO COUNTRIES.

6. NO ACTION WAS TAKEN ON COLOR TELEVISION SETS. HOWEVER, A THREE-YEAR OLD ORDERLY MARKETING UNDERSTANDING DOES EXIST WITH JAPAN. PREDICTABLY, UK OFFICIALS ARE QUICK TO ARGUE THAT THIS UNDERSTANDING IS NOT A VRA, BUT AS JAPANESE ASSURANCE THAT THEY "WILL NOT BUILD UP THEIR UK MARKET TOO FAST."

ARMSTRONG

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